927
.W57G14

SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTION
595.

# MODERN ART AT VENICE

Copyright, 1907, by Burton Mansfield

# MODERN ART AT VENICE
## AND OTHER NOTES BY A. E. G.

J. M. BOWLES PUBLISHER
NEW YORK MCMX

*Copyright, 1910, by A. E. Gallatin*

927
W57G14

CONTENTS

Modern Art at Venice 13
Of Versatility and Whistler 33
The Imagination of Maxfield Parrish 41
The Paintings of Eduard J. Steichen 49
Landscapes by Clark G. Voorhees 57
William J. Glackens: Realist 63
W. E. Henley as an Art Critic 69
Studies in Pictures by J. C. Van Dyke 75

*"'Tis best sometimes your censure to restrain*
*And charitably let the dull be vain"*

POPE

*Whistler's study for his portrait of Carlyle, which appears as the frontispiece to this volume, is reproduced for the first time through the courtesy of Burton Mansfield, Esq. The papers on Steichen and Glackens are printed here through the courtesy of the editor of The International Studio*

# MODERN ART AT VENICE

# MODERN ART AT VENICE

## I

THE biennial exhibition of contemporary art held at Venice in 1909, was a splendid brief in the cause of modern painting, etching, sculpture, architecture, decoration and the allied arts and crafts. Comprehensive and international, it was an adequate summing up of the case for modern art, and every credit is due the juries of each country represented for their judgment in selecting characteristic examples of the work of their most gifted artists—no mean achievement and one which makes these exhibitions stand unrivalled.

The setting and arrangement of the exhibition was unequaled: situated on a wooded island washed by the lagoons, the latter always alive with gondolas and fishing boats with sails stained red and brown, and a garden spot made most alluring with green bushes and dazzling

flowers, the buildings themselves are for the most part examples of the best in architecture of the Modern Style—I prefer this term, used by Reinach, to *l'art nouveau*, which invariably calls up most frightful memories. Besides being eminently suited for the display of the works of art they contain, these buildings, with their decorations and furnishings, show us how many really admirable principles underlie the Modern Style, especially as practised in Austria, Hungary and Germany.

The average specimen, so-called, of the Modern Style, with all its wild exaggerations, is about as worthy of the name as are the majority of the pictures in the Caillebotte collection of the Luxembourg Gallery to be called examples of the Impressionists: these are for the greater part but early experiments and have little in common with the riper fruit of the genius of this group of artists who went to nature for inspiration

and broke away from the bonds of academicism and alleged classicism. The proportions and design of the Hungarian pavilion are really beautiful, and Prof. Maroti of Budapest deserves unstinted praise for this building with doorway and portico of cream-coloured plaster set with greenish-gold tiles and sparkling mosaics. The Modern Style has not yet found itself; it has, in fact, been smothered by the absurdities and exaggerations which have been perpetrated in its name. Ruskin and William Morris were the real creators, or rather forerunners, of the first new style to appear since the atrocious Empire, and as Reinach points out, in its glorification of simplicity it went to Japan for inspiration, and although remaining always absolutely original, freed itself from Greece and her traditions and found "admirable comprehension of flora and fauna as decorative elements." Certain it is that Morris exerted a most

beneficial influence on the whole range of the arts and crafts in Great Britain, and at a time when it was most needed: the Victorian period. This remains a fact irrespective of what Time will have to say of the Modern Style.

The allotment of special pavilions to Great Britain, Hungary, Belgium and Bavaria—exhibitions which show these countries to be possessed of strong national schools—was an excellent feature of the arrangement, as was also the setting aside of certain rooms for different countries, as was done in the case of the United States, while other rooms were for the Venetian artists, the Roman artists, and so on. Also to be commended was the plan of giving separate rooms to certain artists for a comprehensive display of their works; thus Zorn's paintings and etchings, with a few *objets d'art*, numbered seventy-five and Besnard's fifty-three. The only regret is that Spain, who from the time of Velasquez, Murillo, and Ribera has never lost

sight of her great national traditions—but whose art has come down through Goya to the present day Zuloaga and Sorolla should not have been represented. But Spain, it should be noted, as well as Russia, a country also possessed of a number of strong and excellent painters, was represented at the last exhibition.

## II

Ettore Tito, a Venetian, is one of the most interesting painters of the modern Italian school, and his work justly enjoyed the distinction of a separate exhibit. The group of forty-five paintings from his brush, as well as a clever little bronze of Pegasus, well illustrated the range of his talent and proclaimed him to be the leading painter of the Venetian school, which is the greatest of Italy. Tito is a Pleinairist and delights in painting sea and sky made brilliant and vibrating by a noonday sun and thus is able to

parade before us engaging variations of what would seem to be his favourite colour —blue. His works are a glorification of outdoor life and his men and women mounted on horses galloping along the beach, or bathing, nude, in quiet reaches of the sea fairly pulsate with the *joie de vivre*. He is as vigorous as Zorn but more restrained, his palette is more subdued and subtle and his point of view not so frankly realistic. With Zuolaga, Sorolla and Zorn he stands as a logical descendant of Manet and Monet and Pissarro, but does not adhere as closely to their formulae as do Childe Hassam and Besnard.

Camillo Innocenti is a very clever Roman artist whose twenty capital *intime* paintings of women showed him to be a disciple of Impressionism in the larger sense, but whose art has been tempered with the same mellow glow to be found in Gaston La Touche. Pellizza da Volpedo, who hails from Milan, is a Pointillist and a close student of Segantini,

the unmatched portrayer of alpine life and scenery. He is chiefly interesting as showing that Pointillism, that is painting with the spectrum colours in dots, still survives and is not entirely a defunct by-product of Impressionism. Rembrandt Bugatti exhibited a collection of small bronzes of animals which was immensely clever and original in execution, most lifelike, and intensely modern in treatment. These elephants, horses, giraffes and bulls possess that vibration of flesh and faint quiver of life—supreme qualities, first noted by Virgil,—that are found only in great sculpture.

Anders Zorn, with his special exhibit, sustained his reputation as being one of the great realists, and whether employing his joyous palette and vigorous brush or his brilliant etching needle, he always portrays things for us as they actually exist. His strong brushwork and keen observation remind us of Sargent at his best.

The genius of Franz Von Stuck, the most amazing genius of modern Germany, was adequately illustrated by a group of thirty-one paintings and several bronzes and reliefs. Stuck is a pagan of the pagans and his procession of satyrs and fauns, with such of his pictures as *Baccanale* and *Pan* and others of centaurs and nymphs, with their riot of colour are the apotheosis of the *joie de vivre*. His sense of colour is superb and even the palettes of the Venetians pale beside these gorgeous harmonies: a powerful painter is Stuck and many of his pictures are masterpieces.

Paul Albert Besnard, who also had a room to himself, has pushed the teachings of impressionism very far and is always faithful to them. He excels at painting the appearance of flesh as seen in bright sunlight, and his vibrating touches of violet and orange give the effects desired in a very vivid manner. His composition and largeness and boldness of handling

make his work eminently successful when employed as mural decoration, as is seen in his ceiling in the Sorbonne.

There are numerous painters working to-day in England and Scotland who form a strong antidote to the atrocities of the Royal Academy, and are worthy successors to the great eighteenth century painters, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Hogarth, Hopper and Raeburn—one of the greatest group of painters in the history of art. And William Nicholson, William Orpen, William Rothenstein, James Pryde and Wilson Steer—who may conveniently be styled the Chelsea group—are conspicuous among them. These men are true artists; they are painter's painters and men of real genius. D. Y. Cameron, Charles Shannon, Gerard Chowne and Muirhead Bone are also true artists and from this group we may confidently expect to see arise a new Manet, Degas or Whistler.

These are the men to watch; their work contains the germ of great art.

William Nicholson sent a most charming canvas entitled *Alice*, an agreeable arrangement of grey and black, relieved by the flesh color of the face and by blue birds and ribbons upon the sitter's hat. The modelling of the face is superb and the composition and method of applying the pigment are as marvelous as we may always expect to find in a Nicholson. An even finer example of his work is the *Nancy* in the permanent exhibition of modern art in Venice. This is one of the greatest of contemporary portraits, and his portrayal of childhood is one which Sir Joshua might well have been proud to claim as his own; nor is the mellow colour scheme and wonderful composition unlike Reynolds, although the deft and sure handling recalls rather Velasquez as interpreted by Whistler. James Pryde—who with Nicholson was formerly one of the

Beggarstaff Brothers, known to fame some years ago as poster artists,—exhibited a splendid study of a great building which has recently been gutted by fire. Statues on the top of the impressive facade stand out white against a grey sky, which in spots shows blue through the building, and the whole composition is full of deep shadows and ably suggested contrasts.

William Orpen proved himself a master of colour in a painting which represents an artist standing before an open window, with a life-size marble torso of a woman at his side. The values in this painting are very fine,as is the composition and the disposition of the light coming in through the window which faces the spectator. D. Y. Cameron was represented by an impressive view of a towered castle bordering on a lake, made mysterious by the coming night. Cameron is one of the greatest of contemporary etchers and much of his genius

and personality he is also able to express in his paintings. Gerard Chowne had a study of flowers which reminded us of Fantin Latour, and greater praise than this we cannot bestow upon him, for Fantin, more than any other artist, was able to make an attractive picture out of such a difficult subject. Chowne's *Tulips* is a true work of art and it is as engaging as it is splendidly painted. William Rothenstein is a past master of the pastel and the lithograph and many of his portraits of men in these media stand unexcelled; his line is most subtle and pregnant with character, his knowledge of the possibilities and limitations of these vehicles for artistic expression is unrivalled. But interesting as is the painting he exhibited, like most of his others it lacks that spontaneity and charm and sure touch which we find in the pastels and lithographs. Charles Shannon sent one of his very charming and graceful portraits of a young Eng-

lish girl, not unreminiscent of Romney. Other artists who contributed pictures worthy of note were Robert Anning Bell, Sir James Guthrie, John Lavery, George Henry and Cecil Rea.

The United States, with such masters as Sargent, Robert Henri, Childe Hassam, Edmund C. Tarbell and Cecilia Beaux held its own with the rest of the world. Sargent is probably the most uneven of the greater living artists; no other artist gives us such masterpieces as well as such failures. It is only when working in water-colour that he is always sure of success; he never strains his medium, but stops at precisely the correct moment, that is, when he has attained the desired result. His oil portraits usually give the impression that his sitters have been skinned alive and Sargent evidently does not agree with Whistler that flesh should be painted low in tone, as it is in nature, and that the picture should remain well within its frame.

Robert Henri gave us what was probably the most notable portrait in the entire exhibition. It was a full-length portrait of a girl dressed in black, with a dark background and the pose, brushwork, composition and general charm of the picture were beyond criticism. Childe Hassam sent one of his familiar views of the old church at Lyme, Connecticut, painted with his usual skill and according to his usual formula, based largely upon the teachings of Impressionism. Hassam is the greatest exponent of Impressionism in America and one of the greatest landscape artists America has produced. George Bellows was represented by one of his soundly painted and very realistic views of the Hudson River, the late Louis Loeb by one of his exquisite portraits in which his mellow browns and greens are always a delight, and Joseph De Camp, Edward Redfield and Arthur B. Davies by excellent examples of their art.

Winslow Homer, one of the most vigorous and noble painters America has produced, was unfortunately absent.

The section devoted to engravings, lithographs and kindred media contained numerous most interesting works. Muirhead Bone exhibited several etchings which displayed great strength and reminded one of the best performances of Meryon; Rodin was represented by two of his clever etchings, which are in strong contrast to his amazing notes in water-colour for his sculptures, while Steinlen and Raffaelli gave us literal glimpses, full of genius, of the Paris and her varied population which they know so well. The truth and searching, unflinching inquisitiveness of their works make them invaluable historical documents—which value is not lessened, but rather enhanced, because of the fact that these two men are always in sympathy with their subjects. Rops was represented by one of his diabolical creations, Max

Liebermann by a typically strong performance, Arthur Rackham by several of his whimsical and fantastic drawings with their charming colour, and Latenay by one of his extremely beautiful etchings in colour of a landscape.

Helleu had examples of his popular dry-points of fair women, more superficial than usual, and far removed from his drawings in red, black and white chalks, which at their best often recall in charm and sure draughtsmanship the drawings in which Fragonard immortalized the beauties of the eighteenth century. Then there were three of Charles Shannon's inimitable lithographs, studies of the nude, graceful with sweeping lines and as fresh and delightful as was their composition beautiful. Quite worthy are they to be hung in the same exhibition with the nine examples of Whistler's masterly achievements in the same direction, and never, it should be noted, in

such genial environment, have the Master's songs on stone, as he called them, appeared quite so charming and his touch so deft and magical.

# OF VERSATILITY AND WHISTLER

## OF VERSATILITY AND WHISTLER

### I

The geniuses of the Renaissance were men of wide learning and their accomplishments and activities extended to many fields: Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo, for example, attained great eminence and universal recognition in numerous professions. Michael Angelo was the supreme sculptor of all time,* one of the world's foremost painters,** the great architect of his time, a poet of great distinction, and to these gifts, as if to round out his charac-

*Nothing can be positively attributed to Phidias, although, as stated by Reinach, the sculptures on the Parthenon were certainly at least executed under his direction. The Hermes of Praxiteles at Olympia is the only original work by that master in existence.

**In a letter published in Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower's interesting study of Michael Angelo — styled by him the most amazing genius of the modern world — the painter Watts wrote that he preferred the paintings to the sculptures, adding that the paintings in the Sistine chapel are "entirely beyond criticism or praise."

ter, he added that of engineer. Leonardo, in the course of a letter offering his services to the Duke of Milan, styles himself a builder of bridges and war chariots, an inventor of engines of war and one skilled in the science of sieges; he then adds: "I will execute sculpture in marble, bronze, or terra-cotta; also in painting I can do as much as any other, be he who he may."

We live now in an age distinguished for its narrowness and specialization. If a man be a painter, in all probability he is nothing else. And more than likely he will be content to give us year after year repetitions and variations of the same theme—I am not criticising these men but merely recording the narrow range of their talents—an endless series of haystacks or lily ponds, painted during different times of the day, of bright tulip beds, of deserted but fascinating Louis XVI salons, gay only because of their exquisite furniture, bibelots, tapes-

tries, and examples of the debonair masters.

## II

As an artist Whistler was extremely versatile and one must look in vain in the whole domain of art to discover a more brilliant parade of varied genius. The technique of etching he thoroughly mastered as well as that of painting; his water-colours, pastels, dry-points, and drawings done with both pen and pencil also show a complete knowledge of these media for artistic expression. A master of the English language was Whistler, his style virile and all his utterances sparkling with caustic wit and brilliant epigram. The records he made of his numerous quarrels, his letters, and his extremely sound opinions on art are unique and a page in literature which will never fade.

The artist's subjects included portraits of men, women and children of all ages

and conditions, *genre* pieces, landscapes, marines and nocturnes—the first paintings to depict successfully the mystery and poetry of night. He also left behind several very notable examples of interior decoration, including the famous Peacock Room, which has now found its way into a great American collection.

Sometimes Whistler gave us harmonies composed of the most sombre colours, frequently, as in certain portraits, being painted in large part with blacks, but such luminous blacks as only Velasquez was able to obtain; occasionally, as in the canvases painted while obviously under the spell of Japan, the rare harmonies are composed of colours of the greatest brilliancy.

The water-colours and pastels, as well as the etchings and drawings, are notes pregnant with suggestion. Their charm and freshness and spontaneity have not been obliterated by over-elaboration or unnecessary "finish," but work on paper

or copper has been withheld at precisely the right moment; in sheer beauty certain of these pictorial notes have never been excelled.

# THE IMAGINATION OF MAXFIELD PARRISH

## THE IMAGINATION OF MAXFIELD PARRISH

Maxfield Parrish has evolved from his inner consciousness an art that is very personal and full of individuality: peculiarly his own is everything set down by his gifted pencil. This, in itself always a true achievement, is how much more so when this originality, this inventive and creative faculty, is coupled with an art as noteworthy and charming as is that of Maxfield Parrish!

How alluring are always the designs of this artist and what a whole world of entrancing conceits has he conjured up for our delight! Charmingly quaint and prepossessing are these people of his highly imaginative pencil. Perched upon high, the multi-turreted abodes of these engaging creatures are, it is true, very reminiscent of Duerer's copper-plates, as they are also occasionally of the elaborate backgrounds of the *Primitifs*, and

yet these castles and their surrounding landscapes are peculiarly Maxfield Parrish's, so delightfully have they inspired him and so well has he adapted their decorative value to his own uses.

The artist's versatility and the range of his talents are adequately illustrated by his charming series of views of Italian gardens which form such a valuable commentary on the text of Mrs. Wharton's book, by his delightful black and white drawings for Knickerbocker's History of New York, designs fairly overflowing with quiet and subtle humour—this being a characteristic of his art—and by the rather recent set of paintings to illustrate events described in the Arabian Night's Entertainments. These latter pictures display an extremely powerful imagination and a gloriously rich palette, although the colours never even suggest garishness: imagination and colour being certainly two qualities most desirable in attempting to interpret

these fantastic tales of the mystic East. Maxfield Parrish, as Holbein did before him, is able to put the finest detail into his designs without detracting to the slightest extent from the general effect of his compositions. His pictures are so finely wrought, and carried to such a state of perfection, that all traces of spontaneity, regarded as an almost essential quality in a work of art, have completely disappeared. And yet we do not miss this quality or regret it any more than do we when considering an impression from a most laboriously cut block by one of the German "Little Masters."

Maxfield Parrish is a great colourist: never do his delicious pigments fail to give us a most delectable feast. It matters not whether his colours be as pale and cold as those the great Puvis delighted in, or whether he gives us a picture in which they approach in voluptuousness the warm and seductive palette employed in

the pageant paintings of Paolo Veronese: always we perceive that our artist possesses an "exquisite tact in his use of colour." Invariably the colour schemes employed are exquisitely harmonious, delightfully subdued in tone, most grateful to our eyes, and what Bernhard Berenson says of the Venetian painters of the Renaissance applies with equal truth to Parrish: "Their colouring not only gives direct pleasure to the eye, but acts like music upon the moods, stimulating thought and memory in much the same way as a work by a great composer." This is the case with the artist's *chef d'oeuvre*, the mural painting with the rhyme about Old King Cole as its theme.

The artist displays much technical knowledge and cleverness in the execution of his work in black and white; his line is at once flexible and sure, and unerring judgment is shown in the placing of masses. His drawings may

not be the equal of either the woodcuts of Duerer or the results obtained by Beardsley, but they are nevertheless brilliant achievements. His claims to distinction as an artist in black and white include also most interesting effects achieved by stippling; some of these effects are extraordinary, and precisely how much of this amazing stippling is accomplished is the secret of the artist.

Maxfield Parrish is possessed of an art that is subtle and poetical, rare, imaginative, and full of charm; and his art is continually advancing, never falling back upon itself, but always expanding. This being the case, who shall say where these great gifts will eventually carry their possessor, what an art now so exquisite will be when it finally reaches its ripest maturity?

# THE PAINTINGS OF EDUARD J. STEICHEN

# THE PAINTINGS OF EDUARD J. STEICHEN

In a Corot or a Daubigny one finds a record of the spirit of nature: in a landscape by Steichen a reflection of one of the artist's varying moods. Steichen's work is intensely personal and a part of himself; it is the antithesis of the paintings and pastels of such a master as Degas, with their literal transcripts of nature.

One side of Steichen's art owes much to Whistler, and the Master's dicta have never been absorbed with more understanding; assuredly no better text-book than Ten O'Clock, with its sound criticism and the charmed cadences of some of the most beautiful passages in English literature, could be placed in the student's hands. Neither Leonardo nor Sir Joshua nor any other artist-critic has left a document which can compare with this. But Steichen has not attempted the impossible and striven to grasp the

elusive charm pervading Whistler's work: his pictures are invariably the distinctly personal product of a creative mind not hampered, but aided, by tradition.

The artist's range of subject, as well as his methods of interpreting and rendering them, are most varied. That he has not permitted himself to get into a rut or his art to become mannered is well illustrated by such widely differing canvases as the Nocturne of the City of Paris—From Rodin's Studio, by his Still Life—Poppies, by one of the sunlit views across the valley of the Morin and by his impressive and soundly painted portrait of Beethoven.

Such a picture as the nocturne of Paris painted from Rodin's studio, with its superb composition and handling of large, flat masses, its intensely decorative feeling, its curious and alluring colour scheme, is very Whistleresque. And so are certain of the other nocturnes, in particular one containing several vague

and shadowy figures, but dimly suggested in limpid washes. Lyrical qualities abound in these paintings, they are pregnant with the poetry and mystery of night; tonal qualities they contain of the utmost beauty. To obtain results without apparent effort, to keep the surface of the pigment smooth, to balance masses in a decorative manner: these were a few of the lessons Steichen has learned from Velasquez and the Japanese—as filtered through the brain of Whistler.

Another group of paintings, views across the valley of the Morin, display an entirely different influence and mood. He is a pleinairist now and delights to paint vivid sunlight: here we have summer and autumnal landscapes, the greens and yellows, oranges and reds brilliant with vibrating light, or charming little scenes of his cottage and garden—the latter a mass of gorgeous flowers.

The artist's versatility is further illustrated by his painting of a bowl of pop-

pies—only partially shaded from the intense midsummer sun which pours in through the window, making the large crimson petals transparent—and by a night view of a great Colorado canyon, the violet dome above the mighty purple gorges alive with twinkling stars.

Steichen appreciates as much as did Whistler the importance of the relationship between frame and picture. His frames are an integral part of the whole composition, although he has not gone quite so far as did Whistler in sometimes actually painting a pattern upon the frame; his mouldings, composed of narrow parallel ridges, painted a silver grey or a lemon gold, serve to show the pictures as they should be seen to greatest advantage. Encased in distorted frames of gleaming gold of the commercial variety, surely half of their delicious quality would escape.

We have here made note only of Steichen the painter, but perhaps to a

larger audience he is known as a brilliant exponent of the new photography. Certainly a stronger plea for the recognition of photography among the arts has never been made than Steichen's marvellously spaced portraits, so acute and compelling, of Watts, of Lenbach, of President Taft and of other subjects. Composition and selection have certainly everything to say in these amazing and subtle gradations of light and shade, as have they also in his studies of Rodin's Balzac, in his marvellous photograph of Rodin surrounded by his masterpieces, and in other prints.

LANDSCAPES BY
CLARK G. VOORHEES

## LANDSCAPES BY CLARK G. VOORHEES

Very engaging are the landscapes of Clark G. Voorhees: to her sympathetic interpreter Lenox has yielded up much of her beauty. Here we see the Berkshire hills when early May has made them alluring with tender, fragile greens, when nature is gay, when all living things sing from an excess of joy, when the sap rises within the white birch. Now the hills have become enveloped in a mysterious violet haze, and a magic stillness reigns as the pale moon rises over the shadowy tree tops. Now it is midsummer and the scene vibrates with light and heat; then we see the hills turned to russet by the hand of Autumn and a brilliant harvest moon shedding its radiance. Finally we see the silent country covered with a blanket of white. The artist is particularly happy when rendering such scenes: in one picture

there is an extraordinary effect of falling snow and in another the effect of a snowy road containing deep ruts is admirable; the artist is able to make us feel the presence of the grass beneath the snow.

These paintings are first of all a record of the glories of Lenox and the Berkshires, and yet Lyme and one or two other New England towns have seen the artist's easel. A little shipping scene, painted from a palette at once restrained and full of gayety, is delightful, and another picture, called Hawk's Nest Beach, is one of his notable achievements. This canvas, painted with a brush full of rather solid pigment, forms an interesting foil to the artist's March Morning, painted only in the colors of the spectrum, after the manner of the Impressionists, and rather reminiscent of Hassam, with its very sparing use of thin dry violet and orange paint. Through a clump of autumnal woods we catch a

glimpse of yellow beach bordering on a strip of blue-green sea; the composition and the subdued colouring are both satisfying and the whole effect most decorative.

# WILLIAM J. GLACKENS: REALIST

Degas had many cohorts behind him, their numbers variously equipped, as well as strong allies, in his vigorous campaign against the academies.

In Forain and Mary Cassatt, Degas had at least two pupils and disciples to carry forward in a worthy manner the essential characteristics of his art; he had also a vast multitude of followers, and uncounted legions of artists have learned invaluable lessons from his masterly pastels and paintings. William J. Glackens, a young American painter and illustrator, although from Manet, it is true, he has derived also many of his inspirations, is one of these latter artists.

Glackens' paintings and drawings are invariably interesting, for the artist is possessed of an exceedingly fresh and engaging point of view. And yet with all its originality, the art of Glackens is

quite closely linked with that of Degas and Manet; it is, in fact, a lineal descendant. This is not too evident, but Glackens' usual choice of subject, his realism, his composition, his powerful draughtsmanship, and his line, as fluent and full of character as that of a Japanese draughtsman of the first rank, all proclaim that he has absorbed at least some of the lessons to be learned in the work of Degas and Manet.

The subjects which appeal most to Glackens, and the scenes which he is happiest in depicting, are found in the same slums, mean streets and parks in which Degas finds his inspirations when not at a rehearsal of a *corps de ballet* or strolling in the paddock at Longchamps—only they are in the poorer quarters of New York, and not of Paris. But the great difference between Degas and Glackens is that where the former too often seeks for the ugly and repulsive, the painfully sordid, the ultra prosaic,

the latter looks only for what gayety and humour he may discover in the scene. And Glackens is none the less a faithful recorder, an unflinching realist, because his sympathetic pencil is never dipped in gall, as in the case of the brutal brush of the cynical Degas.

Glackens possesses much knowledge of the technique of painting in oils—that most difficult of all media; his composition and his palette are very amusing. His drawings fairly reek with character and his wonderfully expressive line records types in such a truthful and far-seeing manner, his penetrating gaze sees so far beneath the surface of things, that we can only marvel at the simple manner in which he attains his ends. This genius for instantly seizing upon the essentials of human make-up is much of the same order as was that of Daumier—of whom Glackens, it is interesting to note, is a great admirer. With a few rapid strokes of his joyously spontaneous

pencil he is able to record unmistakably some type, but whereas Daumier, as a rule, deliberately caricatured, Glackens only emphasizes salient characteristics.

An artist possessing decided talent is Glackens, and his is a career which the student of contemporary art will do well in following. He has gone far: he is going farther.

# W. E. HENLEY AS AN ART CRITIC

# W. E. HENLEY AS AN ART CRITIC

Brevity is the very soul of the essay. Witness the great Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam: no essayist enjoys a greater reputation than he, and none has employed fewer words to express himself. And this same virtue, which is proverbially the soul of wit, finds another example in William Ernest Henley; fancy the genius of a man who in ninety words can write an essay on the art of Fantin Latour!

Henley was possessed of a most engaging style and his vigorous sentences are packed with thought and information. It is true that he was possessed by many prejudices and his notes on art are scrappy and often but fragments, but we linger over his crisp and lucid sentences in the same way that we delight in repeating the cadences of R.L.S.—that truly great master of style.

Following some remarks on romanticism in that volume of his, Views and Reviews: Essays in Appreciation, which deals with art, Henley gives us a set of Profiles Romantiques, in which we find brilliant passages on the work of Corot, Millet, Fantin, Legros and some twenty other artists. Some Dutch artists and a group of landscapists are in turn followed by some sparkling paragraphs on the work of the chief glory of British art—the great group of portrait painters which includes Reynolds, Gainsborough, Raeburn and Romney.

In a delightful *causerie* on the art critic R.A.M. Stevenson, Henley states that in his opinion Stevenson's Velasquez and Rubens are the only two pieces of true art criticism that England has produced; Ruskin, he says, only gave us "nonsense, nonsense, for many years." George Moore he does not mention at all, while Whistler he considers in a footnote which is here appended:

"I do not forget Mr. Whistler's Ten O'Clock. But that is as it were an indigestion of strawberries, a feast for the high gods; and I fear that it has not had anything like the effect to which its art and brilliancy, let alone its rightness, entitle it."

STUDIES IN PICTURES BY
JOHN C. VAN DYKE

## STUDIES IN PICTURES BY JOHN C. VAN DYKE

The remarks of John C. Van Dyke contained in his Studies in Pictures are very interesting and suggestive. Elementary they are to a large extent, and this they are meant to be, but even the seasoned visitor to the noted galleries will find much in these brief chapters to assist him in a proper comprehension of the Old Masters.

Of particular interest is the author's chapter on the animal in art: Mr. Van Dyke certainly has the strength of his convictions when he speaks of Paul Potter's famous Young Bull as a "good piece of hard drawing which has resulted in a dead museum bull that feigns life with glass eyes and a stuffed body," and when he practically brands Landseer as having been a "nature faker." The first observation is just enough, but the author is certainly too severe on

Landseer, although it is true that his dogs do lack character and have been too much humanized. Velasquez is properly highly praised as a painter of animals and a tribute paid to his great hounds, painted for the sake of purely physical portraits.

From this same chapter I quote the following truth, here so well expressed, "We have come to recognize that there is something more to beauty than proportion, regularity, and symmetry. We know now æsthetic pleasure in strength, movement, relationship, yes, even in awkwardness, clumsiness, and what the world has been pleased to call the ugly. A truth of character, a fitness to a designed end, a proper embodiment of vital energy, may make animal life attractive in spite of classic laws of proportion and academic formulas of what should constitute an ideal."

In Mr. Van Dyke's final chapter, concerning landscape and marine painting,

we are reminded that landscape is the "most modern subject with which the painter's brush has dealt." Until the time of Claude and Poussin the landscape existed only as a background—it never was painted for its own sake. Claude and Poussin with their ideal and classic landscapes were theatrical, but they were remarkable men for their time and paved the way for Corot, Rousseau, Diaz, Dupré and Daubigny.

The theories and aims of Monet, Pissarro, Sisley and the other Impressionists are explained in a most intelligent manner. Their art is directly descended from that of Corot and his school, who were the first artists to paint landscapes as such and as they really existed, and their method of painting, with its revised "scale of light," is "an advance on the older art in many ways."

Reproduced in connection with this chapter is a marine by Winslow Homer, who paints the sea with marvellous

understanding; as one able to grasp and record its very atmosphere and briny smell he is without a peer.

*One hundred and seventy-five copies of this book were printed during February, 1910, by The Forest Press Company, New York, and the types distributed*

*By the same writer*

## WHISTLER: NOTES AND FOOTNOTES AND OTHER MEMORANDA

Including essays on Leonardo da Vinci and Puvis de Chavannes as caricaturists, Childe Hassam, Everett Shinn and the English caricaturists. Nine plates of an unusual character enrich the volume, including two hitherto unpublished works by Whistler, one in Heliotype and one in colour. (1907)

THE DIAL — Mr. Gallatin's notes are thoughtful and suggestive, and have the merit of brevity. The book . . in all the details of fine book-making is impeccable.

NEW YORK HERALD — Under the transparent initials of A. E. G., a well-known New York art critic and connoisseur has here gathered together a number of short essays . . The Whistler notes are amusing, and biographically as well as critically valuable. The tributes to Everett Shinn and Childe Hassam are well deserved and well done.

LIFE — Contains a number of critical or curious memoranda upon art and artists, reprinted from various publications and of interest to collectors and other amateurs. A lesson and example in exquisite taste and the art of book-making. Enriched by a number of very interesting reproductions.

THE JOHN LANE CO.
PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK

## WHISTLER'S ART DICTA AND OTHER ESSAYS

With letters by Whistler reproduced in facsimile and unpublished drawings by Aubrey Beardsley. (1904)

THE OUTLOOK — This exquisite volume will be a valuable keepsake to those who admire Whistler. It is remarkable, first, because of its superb print, secondly, because of some remarkable facsimiles, and thirdly, because of a criticism which may well be a *vade mecum* to those who would better understand Whistler.

THE LAMP — A work of unquestionable value to all whose interests include the two most conspicuous examples of originality in contemporary illustration and art.

NEW YORK HERALD — This little book, whose title-page bears the transparent initials of A. E. G., the American authority on Whistler and Beardsley, contains not "infinite riches," for I am not in an exaggerative mood, but a goodly competence of information "in a little room." *(OUT OF PRINT)*

## AUBREY BEARDSLEY'S DRAWINGS: A CATALOGUE AND A LIST OF CRITICISMS

With a biographical and critical note, and numerous hitherto unpublished drawings and portraits. (1903)

THE STUDIO — All who appreciated him as a genius and loved him as a friend will welcome this tribute . . with its sympathetic sketch of his career and its complete list of his drawings.

ACADEMY AND LITERATURE (London) — A rare prize for the Beardsley collector . . a very joy to possess, a catalogue which no lover of Beardsley's work can well do without . . Good taste shown in the whole production. *(OUT OF PRINT)*

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION LIBRARIES
3 9088 01746 1377